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THE CAUSES OF AND ANTIDOTE FOR INDUSTRIAL UNREST

The causes of industrial unrest, as of any outburst of popular feeling, are necessarily of two sorts. In the first place, the underlying conditions governing the position in society of the restless group must have become subject to some strain. And second, circumstances must be such that this strain produces a pronounced cracking and dismemberment instead of a gradual and perhaps unnoticeable readjustment. In dealing with unrest a considerable alleviation may be effected by removing the special irritants which have incited to disorderly methods; also a crisis may be explained to some extent by showing what barriers which formerly stood in the way of change have ceased to exist. But important as a knowledge of the contributing factors is, it is hardly necessary to say that the real explanation of and cure for any problem must finally rest on a true understanding and treatment of fundamental conditions.

In a recent article entitled "Labor and Production,"¹ the writer has set forth various reasons why he believes that the time has come when labor should actively turn its attention toward problems of production and set its shoulder firmly to the task of building up an industrial structure dedicated and designed expressly for output and inspirited in such a fashion as to be from top to bottom a force for genuine efficiency. It is obvious, however, that not a great deal of progress can be made along this line, except as the present spirit of unrest in the ranks of labor is dissipated. In this article it is therefore proposed to complete the earlier inquiry by examining into the other side of the problem and noting, with all the candor that the situation requires, just what reforms and rearrangements in the relationship between the management of industry and the workers is necessary if labor is to throw its whole weight and heart into the cause of a sensible and progressive

¹ Published in the *American Federationist*, March, 1920.

productivity. The conclusions reached will necessarily be as far-reaching as the causes of the present unrest are old and fundamental; but every proposal is made in the interest of making society more secure, more prosperous, and more free, not only for labor, but for every element in our national population.

At the outset it might be well to note that unrest, as such, is far from being an unusual or even a regrettable thing. Every person, or group of persons, who strives or hopes is certain from time to time to meet with disappointment. Frequently defeat comes without any apparent justice. Innumerable are the times when men are riled and embittered, when the will of man breaks in vain against overpowering circumstances and is thrown back in defeat and disquiet. But for the most part and most of the time the tide and cross-currents of hope and success, of failure and unrest, flow back and forth through human nature almost unnoticed. Individuals rise in the business of life or fail; men fight through to the accomplishment of their purposes or are lost; ideas and movements come and go. All is a part of the daily grist of life.

There are, however, times when the agitation of the human race, instead of being local, split up, and self-contradictory, becomes social and universal; when that which in individuals might dissipate itself without tangible result seizes hold of great groups of men and rocks society to its foundations.

At such times as this—and the present is a case in point—it is popularly supposed that certain individuals, easily recognized as leaders, are responsible, or that the root of the whole upheaval consists in the diligent propagation of certain ideas. As a rule this is a most inadequate explanation. The final explanation of a popular movement is not that there is a leader. There are always individuals who are trying to lead in almost any direction that can be imagined. The significant thing about a movement is that there are followers. The real cause of any group attitude lies in the basic circumstances that bring men together, in the widespread conditions that cause large numbers of persons to have the same outlook and to press on along a common course of action. Social unrest is an indication that something is out of equilibrium, and

that large numbers of people are more or less united in their understanding or feeling as to where the difficulty lies.

We are at present called on to face one of the most serious periods of unrest through which the world has ever passed, not more intense, possibly, than that which swayed the France of the Revolution, or the Germany of the religious wars, but far wider in scope and in many ways fully as sweeping in immediate results. America, though as yet only on the outskirts of the commotion, is nevertheless very much involved. It is not necessary to count the volume of newspaper space devoted to phases of industrial unrest, or to name the crisis after crisis that has risen in American industrial life to convince one's self of the paramountcy of this issue. It is on everyone's tongue and in everyone's mind. Abroad the situation has been much more acute, amounting in Russia and Germany to revolution, and in England to what may yet prove to be sweeping changes in the position of the government. But even in this country the situation has been, and, in spite of a possible easing of the situation, will continue to be, of such importance as to challenge all the nation's resources in leadership.

The difficulty is that very few Americans understand how fundamental is the real nature of the crisis through which the country is now passing. Many think that it has grown out of the war. Doubtless the war has hastened it, and certainly the mal-adjustments of the war have made the situation much more excitable and critical. But in all their essentials the problems which we are now facing had already taken quite definite shape before the war was ever thought of in this country. And the same was true in England, in Russia, and to a much lesser degree in Germany. Years before the war started the industrial problem was looming large in England. In this country the period antedating the war was marked by industrial troubles of growing seriousness. It was well understood among the more observant students of social and economic problems that the country was well on the road toward the sort of unrest which has lately showed itself everywhere; and, in fact, toward much worse conditions than have yet arisen. The only uncertainty lay around the question as

to whether the country might not be able by early action to remove the conditions making for unrest before the situation actually became critical. Without the war it is probable that developments would have come more slowly and quietly. But the real solution to the problems that now threaten us will not be found until it is clearly realized that it is the basic industrial structure that is creaking and inadequate, and not any chance thing that has happened this year or last.

Likewise it is necessary to an understanding of the American industrial problem to realize that our problem is not identical with that of other countries. Unrest is as wide as the world. But there are several distinct varieties; and it destroys all balanced judgment with regard to the situation in America if we keep imagining, as many do, that our country is suffering, or is likely to suffer, from just the same ailments that, for instance, affect Russia. To some extent movements that take place in one country affect other countries also. But the influence is very slight; or, if it is important, it is very, very slow, unless, indeed, tendencies already inherent within a country are ripe and ready to operate in the direction of the foreign influence. Of course we are interested in watching the innovations in government which Russia is trying. But it is safe to say that, whatever the form of government which the Russians establish, it could not be applied in detail to the United States; and there is no appreciable portion of the American people who would wish it or advocate it. Russia is not an industrial country. Her experience under the government of the czars and in the war has been so unlike our own; her causes for unrest are so unique, her problems so peculiar, as to deprive her example of any great value, or, indeed, of any great danger. Much as we may sympathize with the Russians in the terrible experiences through which they have passed, there is no reason for supposing that they are exercising any special influence over American institutions. It is, indeed, quite the custom to call this thing Bolshevik, or that thing a soviet, but the things so called are such only in name. Whether good or bad, they have grown up because of American conditions. With unimportant exceptions their connection with Russia is wholly a matter of fancy.

There are also important differences between the problem of unrest as it exists in Great Britain and in the United States. In spite of the similarities in language, in institutions, and in social and industrial development, the ideals of labor in the United States and England are at considerable variance. In England the working population stands out as a comparatively distinct class in the community; whereas in the United States the line of cleavage is not so clear or permanent. In England the labor movement is much older, is more completely recognized and accepted, and has great though not yet decisive strength in the British government. English labor, having long ago won security for its own organization, is now ambitious to rise out of a subordinate position and play an important rôle both in the government of the state and in the management of industry. American labor has of late shown some tendencies along the same line, but its leaders are as a rule still opposed to such a development. It may be said, therefore, that, as far as labor matters go, England and the United States are in different stages of development. In general the causes of unrest in all the advanced industrial countries are much the same; and this would include the United States, England, France, and Germany. In each country, however, there are special features entering into the labor situation which make conditions more or less peculiar. In this article, therefore, the question of unrest is discussed with the understanding that the analysis is intended to apply especially to conditions as they exist in the United States.

The basic change in America's underlying industrial conditions which, some years before the war, may be said to have begun to create industrial unrest was the culmination of the movement toward the large-scale organization of industry and society, which in this country began, roughly speaking, about three-fourths of a century ago. In earlier American life there had been much inequality; but it was usually an individual matter. There were poor people; there were slaves; a very large number—possibly as many as one-half—of the original colonists came to this country as indentured servants. There had indeed been political upheavals and sectional strife, the settlers against the landed proprietors, the

colonists against the mother-country, the farmers against the people of the towns, the West against the East. In all these cases fairly large groups of people had been involved, and they had made themselves felt, the unrest being allayed in each case by changes in the structure of our government. But industrial unrest, in the sense in which we now speak of it, had hardly showed its head; it was hardly known.

It is worth while to inquire rather carefully into the theory of industrial relations under which our country was started, and on which during these early days it got along fairly well. For it is just because most of the conditions then prevailing have since changed, and yet we are still trying to get along on the same old and now obsolete ideal, that the specter of unrest is at this moment so ominously overclouding our sky.

Alfred Marshall, the most scholarly of modern English economists, starts his great work by declaring that *economic freedom* is the essential characteristic and basis of the modern industrial system. In this phrase, or in Marshall's fuller expression *freedom of industry and enterprise*, is summed up the ideal which in America even more than in England has been the very core of all economic and social philosophy and practice. Our country has been built up and our industry sustained on the fine old ideal of individual liberty and independence. This spirit ruled in the opening of the West; also in the development of that resource in invention and manufacturing technique which has made America's industries world-famous. In the days of its strength this idea made of America a land of the free, a haven for the oppressed of every country, a country of optimism and achievement, of varied life, yet essential unity. To the man who wished to rise the opportunity was open. His personal force quickly lifted him as high as he could go, or left him on that level for which his own qualities and energy adapted him. There could be no general sense of helplessness. Dissatisfaction was dissolved in effort.

It is in no spirit of pessimism that the fact is here recorded that the day when America could rest secure in the efficacy of this simple yet beautiful philosophy of life has long since passed forever. In its proper time it meant freedom, opportunity, and

security for the vast majority of the people. But as the years have passed by it has increasingly fallen short of satisfying the requirements of the newer industrial age.

The first inadequacies of the scheme by which each individual was thought of as a free lance, depending on his own knightly qualities to advance and conquer, came with the introduction into urban localities of extensive wage-earning classes. The industrial problem was still comparatively simple, however, down to the great era of railroad building and rapid national expansion of business which followed the Civil War. By the eighties the structure of American life was beginning to take on the forms with which we are now familiar. Now, a generation later, the mass of the people is just beginning to feel and in part understand the real significance of the new social age which has developed. Also at this same time, under the stimulus of the war, the process of economic integration has entered upon what may be regarded as its last and most comprehensive stage.

It is useless to deplore the developments by which the individual producer, instead of being his own manager, has become to an ever-increasing extent merely a part of some larger movement. Many years ago the introduction of the railroad and improved mail service started, and then later the introduction of the telegraph and telephone, and now the aeroplane, have made inevitable the organization of society along professional, industrial, and trade lines instead of along individual or local geographical lines. National organization has become a possibility and a necessity. The gradual welding of the railroads into one whole; the establishment of more and more complete combination in shipping, in the steel industry, in banking; the attainment of a constantly clearer consciousness of organic unity in the clothing industry, the coal industry, and fruit growing, to name only a few—all this will continue to go on. Large-scale organization has often originated in the desire to control prices. But it is perpetuated and strengthened because of the many ways in which conscious co-operation among large numbers of people can be made of mutual advantage. The great processes of national life are being functionalized and will doubtless continue to be more and more integrated

until the whole weight of each industry can be thrown into the great effort for unified productive efficiency.

The whole trend of industry today is away from the conception of individuals working for themselves, and even from the notion of a plant which is a law unto itself. Sometimes combination is the result of the enterprise of financiers; sometimes it first occurs among the workingmen, through their union organizations; sometimes it is brought about by the direct action or influence of the federal government. But whether encouraged or fought, it persists, and is today much stronger and more universal than ever before. It is now becoming apparent that the civilization in which each man could be king in his own world is gone, and the average individual must from now on become one of a great many who are below looking up at organizations and forces almost wholly beyond their power and often quite beyond their comprehension.

It takes a long time after new mechanical inventions have been made for man to adapt himself to the full possibilities of their use; and it takes still longer for man to part company with the ideals as to what constitute normal and proper human relationships, which grew up under some earlier system. Nevertheless the beginning of the adaptation of American thought and morals to the new conditions of large-scale production began in a small way a good many years ago. The dogmatists continued to preach the old creeds, but here and there practical, observant men began to urge the adoption of new standards and institutions that would better serve the actual needs growing out of the new ways of earning a living. In this spirit labor unions were raised from unlawful to lawful associations; factory laws and labor legislation of many types began to be enacted; and the employers, on their part, began to introduce various plans which they called welfare work or labor representation in management.

These measures have made for readjustment; but unfortunately it now appears that they have not moved nearly as rapidly or penetrated nearly as deeply as the conditions required. The violent agitation of the war has in one great concussion practically dissolved the old order and introduced a new; and the country has been

found altogether too inadequately prepared. Change, which for many years proceeded but slowly, is now racing ahead much faster than readjustment. Unrest is getting the better of comprehension. The situation has become immensely critical, and there is need that everyone frankly take stock of the situation and see what needs to be done in order that the real aims of our liberty-loving fathers, as opposed to their more detailed plans, may be effectively realized.

The basic cause, in a word, of the almost universal unrest of today is the fact that our public law and the more articulate thought of the country remain much the same as they were many years ago; whereas the real needs and feelings of the great bulk of the people have lately undergone a basic and in some respects very sudden change. The more audible public opinion of the country still prides itself on its Americanism, and by that is meant self-reliance, independence, determination, and equal opportunity. But the people who talk most in this strain are the relatively few who occupy more or less independent positions in the upper layers of our economic or social life. While they inquire how business may be made profitable to the business enterpriser, or how much an employee may be expected to live on, group after group of equally genuine Americans are coming to realize that they are practically shut out forever from the chance of earning more than a wage, or being more than a subordinate in some large organization. In other words, underneath the time-hallowed superstructure of American traditions the underlying psychology of the people is rapidly shifting from the mental attitude typical of the independent farmer, man of business, or workman, so characteristic of our earlier history, to that of the rather helpless mortal who finds himself near the bottom of a dark and heavy social structure.

The rapidity with which this change of viewpoint has taken place and the extent to which it has reached even the highest classes is almost unbelievable. The writer, who comes from a family neither of business people nor of so-called working people, was brought up in a non-union town. His first conception of anything unstable in the industrial situation was gained during

graduate work at a great and on the whole conservative university. It was perfectly clear to the able students of social conditions who taught there that the country was approaching a serious crisis. Yet to the average American observer the evidences of approaching change were not at that time particularly startling.

But the last few years have heaped proof on proof that America is changing. The writer remembers when the term socialism had a mysterious and rather horrible sound. Several years ago about one-third of the votes cast in the municipal election of his native city were socialist. But people do not talk much of socialism any more. The government has extended its powers so rapidly that what was recently a mere theory has now become to a considerable extent an accomplished fact; and now everyone is too much worried over the practical problems involved in the extension of governmental power along lines which there has been no escaping to grow either wildly enthusiastic or firmly denunciatory over the abstract question as to whether such extension should have taken place. This growth of governmental activity has indeed been not only a result but also a further cause of the big change in the psychology of the people. In the presence of the power of the government we all feel somewhat awed and fearful. In a sense the growth of governmental activity tends to throw everyone into the class of employees, the government itself becoming the biggest of employers, and in many respects the hardest on which to make any impression.

No more illuminating insight into the thoroughgoing character of the change in popular sentiment in recent years could be gained than that which would come from an observation of the altered attitude of the press. Liberals are constantly accusing the press of being reactionary and dominated by business interests. Yet the papers are constantly giving greater and greater recognition to issues raised by labor, and many far-reaching proposals are treated with a consideration that a few years or even months ago would have been undreamed of. Moreover there have arisen two entirely new types of journalism, the one edited by intellectual liberals who in their zeal for truth and constructive reform have set a new standard in American periodical literature; and the other

edited by extreme radicals whose outspoken pronouncements have had a far wider distribution and influence than most people have until quite recently realized. Americans are thinking boldly and exhaustively concerning the make-up of their economic institutions; and it will be a miracle if politically as well as industrially the distribution and exercise of power in America does not shortly undergo far-reaching change.

One of the outstanding features of the present time is the prospective increase in the power of what Americans know as the labor movement, due to the alliance which labor is apparently in the course of making with two hitherto unaffiliated groups. It is almost a truism to say that the people who work make up almost all of the population, and that their wishes and welfare are the chief mandates and ends of any democratic society. But in the past the people who work have by no means been a unit; certainly they have not regarded themselves as members of one laboring class. First, well on to one half of the population live in the country and are largely farmers. Though hard workers, they have had no connection with the organized-labor movement. Then in the great industries the clerks, the brain workers, and others associated with the management have placed their hope in individual advancement rather than in organized activity. They have regarded themselves as above mere workingmen in quite the same spirit as the employers.

Today the farmers and the industrial workers are working in closer sympathy. The farmers are rapidly developing organizations of their own to protect themselves against banking interests, middlemen, and unfavorable governmental action. They have therefore become champions of the idea of co-operative organization and may easily perfect a more or less formal alliance with the wage-earning population. Also the clerical, or what in England would be called the lower middle, classes are in their manner of thinking nearer the manual laborers and skilled tradesmen than heretofore. The rise in the cost of living has hit this class especially hard, and various groups among them are being won over to the idea of organization. Teachers, from the graded schools to the universities, are taking steps in this direction. Government

employees are making a fight for the right of collective bargaining. But whether organized or not the sympathies of this large section of the people which hitherto have been with the well-to-do classes are rapidly warming toward the plans and hopes of the working people.

Another important feature of the present situation is the extent to which the higher grades of responsible employees, technical experts, and even executives are coming to find themselves at heart in sympathy with the masses of men with whom they deal. This condition has not yet become general. But among engineers, efficiency experts, lawyers, writers, college professors, and government officials there are many—and often they are men at the top of their professions—who, while recognizing that there are many practical difficulties ahead that must be studied calmly and carefully, are nevertheless turning over in their minds and patiently trying to work out changes that in the end would be a good deal more radical than those which the majority of the labor leaders of today have any thought of advocating.

The extent of the general acceptance of the movement which is making for a new outlook on American political and industrial problems is also suggested by the course which has for some years past been followed to a greater and greater degree by American legislative bodies. In the case of a number of specific pieces of legislation, labor has at one time or another forced through its own measure. More significant, it may be noted that almost all of the legislation passed in recent years has been drawn with a fuller appreciation of the needs of the masses of the people. In the instance of the federal government, take as illustration the changed attitude toward the tariff, taxation, appropriations, and the extension of various governmental services. In the instance of the state governments consider the compensation laws, factory-inspection acts, and other labor legislation. In the instance of the municipal governments there has been a new spirit evidenced in the attitude toward public-utility franchises, public recreation, charity organization, and many other matters. Still more marked progress has been made in certain branches of administration,

as witness the striking development in the methods of governmental labor administration made during the war.

In the meantime sentiment has already definitely crystallized against the exercise by business interests of arbitrary or uncontrolled power in all matters that involve the interests of the public as buyer. Group action has already gone far toward taming business enterprise as applied to the operation of public utilities. Group opinion has already outlawed the morality which used to hold that the prices which a man asked, or the profits which he made, were his own affair only. Profits have not to any great extent been curbed, except through taxation or strictly war-time and temporary regulation. But the public conscience has taken the unprecedented stand—at least unprecedented in our century—that profits which do not correspond to service are unfair, that business activity that does not benefit the public, or that is paid for out of proportion to its value, is immoral. The new word “profiteer” has found its way into the popular vocabulary, and what was formerly hidden in the sacred confines of private business rights has now become a matter of public concern. All this augurs the coming of a day when the right of individuals to conduct as private ventures things which are in reality great public undertakings will be challenged both in the name of the public for whom the work is done and in the name of the indefinitely large number of persons who put their lives into making such great enterprises possible.

The challenge is in fact already upon us. The timbers in our industrial structure even now tremble menacingly, as the highly respected forces created and kept in power by the traditions of the past find themselves confronted by new ideas and determinations which blast away at what we have been accustomed to regard as the very foundations of our civilization. The great demand of the times is for something that will end unrest, that will restore order and security, and make it possible for America and the world to go on along the road of sound progress toward the greater prosperity which it has always been the aim of all thoughtful citizens to create. What can be done to thwart the menace

presented by the coal strike, the marine workers' strikes, the threatened railroad strike, and in general by the disquiet and unrest which pervades so many corners of our national industrial life?

One very definite suggestion often heard nowadays is that there must be a show-down. It is said that the time has come to demonstrate once and for all who is to rule, whether labor or the properly constituted authorities, including in the latter the managers of industry and the various classes of property owners and professional men who make up the backbone, or at least the head, of our present society. Labor, it is said, does not know when it has had enough. Discipline must be restored. We must get back to pre-war conditions.

The utter inadequacy of such a program is evident as soon as it has once been stated and examined. A show-down is often necessary in human affairs. Every election and every well-fought contest of any sort is something of that kind. But it must be remembered that a show-down is only successful against someone who is inherently wrong or weak. Now there are numerous instances where a firm stand against some particular group of working people or against some special claim of labor as a whole is feasible. But to plan for a contest in which the whole body of labor will be arrayed against the whole body of capital or of the government is to invite disaster. There would be too many on one side. That is precisely the thing which we should do everything in our power to prevent.

There is only one way in which to eliminate once and for all the sort of unrest which now prevails, and that is for society to turn squarely around in its theory and practice and recognize the fact that the prime end of all our institutions, both industrial and political, should be the greatest possible welfare of the people who work and the people who consume. The adoption of such a national faith would not be a class movement; on the contrary, it is the negation of the class idea, or at least the putting of all classes on an equal footing. Numerically speaking, the great bulk of the population in any industrial community are working people. Where there is one head of a concern there are a thousand

employees. Any democratic program, any program for government, political or industrial, which proposes to treat all persons alike must give many times as much thought to the welfare of the thousand persons who make up the rank and file of employees as is given to that of the head of the concern. In fact, if the welfare of the mass of the people is put first, that of the few chosen individuals who are placed in positions of authority can be left very largely to take care of itself. Even the most democratic social organization will raise up leaders and take care that they do not want for power and reward. If the people who now regard themselves as the masters of industry would reconstitute themselves as the leaders and servants of their associates the whole problem of unrest would be solved, and the only possible stable basis would be laid for the construction of a democratic, efficient, and satisfactory industrial organization.

In this connection it is very helpful to consider the experience of the world with political government. Man probably grew up and developed his character during long ages when people lived together in small family groups, not more than a few dozen persons in a group at the most. A select, intimate circle of this kind has been man's ideal during all the long years which have passed since. But the actual limitation of social structure to groups of this size would not have permitted the growth of civilization or the attainment by man of many of the material things and opportunities for culture which he craved. Long ago, therefore, there began the development of large-scale organization as far as government was concerned. It was largely the ambition of kings or generals that formed the ancient empires, but in affording greater security and laying the basis for commerce and industry they served a vital popular need. Nevertheless there have been periods during the history of almost every kingdom when governmental power has been exercised on the theory that it was a private right of the king. For the sake of the advantages of national unity, or because they could not help it, people tolerated the growth of an arbitrary power which blotted out many of the primitive liberties, which, in a simpler state, man had once been accustomed to enjoy.

The growth of large-scale organization in government, and the subordination of large numbers of people to the will of king and nobles, is a more or less obscure story, in which myth is mingled with the dim record of wars and migrations, of political strategy and enslavements. The other half of the story is much better known: for a long time the mass of the people all over the known world had been in a state resembling serfdom; then the people of Western Europe, the English in particular, started out on a course of emancipation. In the latter country national unity had fortunately been attained many years before, and because of its insular position the people were long immune from serious danger of invasion. The English discovered how to leave intact the centralized structure of the state and yet obtain a large degree of control over it. Through the limitation of the powers of the king, the winning for the people of civil liberties and rights, and the development of parliamentary government the English reconciled the establishment of great national power and almost perfect order with the achievement of a high degree of personal freedom and the exercise over the state of popular control. That achievement America received as its birthright, and this ideal has always been our chief pride and most guarded possession.

To all persons who are steeped in the American spirit it is submitted that a substantially similar course of evolution must take place in matters of industrial control if the American tradition of democracy and freedom is to be maintained and made effective. The true successors of the men who fought for American liberties in 1776, of those who ventured forth single-handed to subdue the Great West, are not the men who today insist that the country's great established industries are the private property of absentee stockholders, and that thousands of men whose whole lives are devoted to an industry have not the right to select a representative even to talk with those in charge. Men who would today carry on the great American tradition of liberty and fair play, of extending the opportunity for a richer life to even the humblest person born or adopted by this country, have a far different rôle to play.

Assuming, as we must assume, that nearly all Americans will henceforth be a part of large organizations, or at least be under obligation to co-ordinate themselves to customs and standards set for large numbers of people, the great task before twentieth-century statesmanship is to make the income, freedom, and happiness of each person as secure as previous centuries have made his person and property. It is becoming more and more difficult and undesirable for men to shift from one employing organization to another. Labor turnover is costly; and in every field where combination is practically complete it is of course almost impossible to shift unless one abandons his occupation, and possibly his home. In any case the remedying of grievances by getting out, while valuable as a last resort, is not a satisfactory method of doing away with the ordinary run of complaints. At the same time the possibility of a forced dismissal from one's job is an ever-present peril to what every man has a right to consider, and should be encouraged to consider, as one of his greatest assets.

The exact methods by which individuals imbedded in a great industrial structure may be guaranteed rights as effective as those enjoyed by citizens under the great bills of civil rights cannot easily be determined. The efficiency of industry must be considered as well as the rights of men. There are, however, certain steps which it is very evident would add both to security and to efficiency. Without venturing to discuss the more doubtful and complicated cases, it may be said that the following would go far toward meeting the more immediate needs: assurance of the widest possible range of employment for all who wish to work; the best available opportunities for technical and general education; a minimum wage as high as the general productivity of labor would permit; leisure; freedom of speech; freedom of association in any way or for any purpose not criminal; discharge only after trial by one's peers; a voice in the determination of working conditions and environment; such a division of the profits as would be consistent with a fair evaluation of the contribution of the various parties to the success of an industry; such a participation in the management of the enterprise as the skill, judgment, and interest of the various groups

of participants would warrant; and finally full information for employees regarding industrial processes, trade relations, financing, and, in general, the aims and circumstances of the business.

If it is difficult to draw up a perfect bill of rights, it is still more hazardous to prophesy just what superstructure should arise from such a foundation in order to make effective the just and democratic administration of industry and the vigorous and profitable attainment of results. Probably the details of such machinery will never be worked out perfectly. It would have to reconcile great employer, employee, and public interests, and would need to be reshaped after every great change in the technique or organization of industry. But if the general purpose of industry is once made a matter of general agreement, and the rights and interests of the men who participate in it are once clearly recognized, further questions will be primarily ones of detail, and their solution will not entail the basic clashing of classes and uncertainty from which the world is now seeking to escape.

While no concrete suggestions with regard to the more tangible forms of industrial structure can be taken up in this article, it may be pointed out that even under the most democratic ideal of industrial control the character and degree of the power of employees must be somewhat unevenly developed in various industries. Strong arguments can be advanced, for instance, in favor of allowing the professors in a college to control the curriculum—as far as the curriculum is shaped by authority—and in fact they do so in many cases. Likewise it might be well for the janitors to work out many of their problems. But there would seem to be no good reason why democratic control in the universities should be made so wide that the janitors would participate in matters involving the curriculum. In other words, the control which employees exercise will often have to be restricted rather closely to the particular problems affecting their own work, though under other conditions and in other industries it is possible that employees might properly have a voice in deciding very large matters of policy. Also the profits of an industry might in some extreme cases go entirely to employees, but in other cases not at all. There would not seem to be any strong reason why any important

part of the profits of a law firm should be shared with the office boy. In general it might be said that in a new industry, or in an industry depending largely on the enterprise of some one class, a larger proportion, perhaps in extreme cases all, of the profits might well go to the element which is active in initiation and direction. But in old industries run along lines that have almost become a tradition, and from which the founders have long since vanished, there is a very strong argument in favor of placing responsibility and reward upon the people who have grown up in the industry and are actually carrying it on. Between these extremes there must be countless variations in circumstances and practical needs whose full analysis and working out, industry by industry, will be an age-long and a more or less recurrent task.

But while the complete realization of such a program as has been here outlined may require many years—if, indeed, it is ever complete—it is none too soon to decide on a fundamental basis for action. The central thought of those who would constitute themselves the architects of a new industrial order should be to plan for the enrichment of life within industry in the same ambitious way in which business men and professional men plan for the erection of their own fortunes. The idea that a person should work up and get somewhere was all right for the culture that prevailed before the Civil War, and it is a sound philosophy for a limited number of people today. But for the rank and file the notion of rising above one's fellows is an impossible one. Not all can be on top. What we need, if the energetic people of this country are to be satisfied, is to better the conditions of those who must permanently remain in ordinary positions. It is not a question as to how much a man has a right to. It is a question as to how much it is possible by the utmost use of ingenuity to give him. The concept of a hired man, a hand, a wage-earner, must be dropped. If a business man wishes to appear at work at ten and leave at four, take the week-end off, and now and then take a long vacation, as some men do, then that is not an outlandish thing for a workman to desire—though, of course, it may be questioned whether at this time it is practicable of accomplishment, and whether many would, in fact, desire it. If a successful man chooses to throw away money on

some fancy, as a yacht or special hobby, then it is not surprising that workingmen or their wives may also sometimes spend their money on things that other people think they do not need. If an employee wishes to live his own life in his own way, why should he not be as free as any citizen of our country and have the right to express his own opinions, follow his own bent, and, as far as the conditions of industry will permit, do precisely as he wishes?

It is our belief that a large part of the unrest in this country is due to a feeling on the part of liberty-loving and ambitious men, Americans either by birth or by choice, that somebody, somewhere, is relegating them to an inferior position. They feel that the bars have been erected against their advancement in income and standing, that others are deciding for them what they shall have, and that the whole system of things is being run without a view to their interests.

This feeling has been growing for many years, and is the natural outcome of the large-scale, impersonal, and often autocratic forms of industrial organization which in the last few decades have become very widespread. The war has greatly intensified this whole movement; and still more recently the government has been compelled to enter in and make decisions which have enormous possibilities of influencing labor for good or bad. Between the firm, restraining hand of a mighty government and the active and almost vicious attacks of a certain element among the employers the whole labor movement is at present trembling in insecurity. Yet industry is so vast that except through organization of some effective kind the individual workman would be largely powerless.

The situation is at present very acute, and it is hard to say what the immediate outcome will be. Possibly matters will quiet down after a little and readjustment go on more orderly. Such an outcome is certainly to be hoped for. It is hard to see, however, how the permanent outcome can consist in anything less than a decisive revamping of the whole industrial structure. The people of America will not be satisfied until the whole of the gigantic new machinery of production has been made subservient to the public interest, and until the anomaly of great industries manipulated

in the interests of a few has been cleared up. It is time that the best thought of the country be turned to the task of developing basic rights and constructing representative machinery that will bring the great industries under democratic control, and at the same time lay the basis for their vigorous, more efficient, and more public-spirited development.

Is this an antidote for industrial unrest? If carried through to the end, we believe that it would be, at least to industrial unrest in the form in which we know it. The acceptance of one fundamental aim, such as that suggested in this article, must indeed be supplemented by much hard and intelligent work in the way of building new industrial institutions that will stand the strain and put concrete reality into the abstract idea of industrial justice and partnership. But though a notion as to the end to be attained will not in itself solve the problem, neither can the problem be worked out by any amount of hard labor unless the right conception as to the fundamental cause of dissatisfaction and the fundamental need of labor is grasped. There is at present a great deal of confusion of ideas on this point; and it has been in the hope of shedding some light on the subject that this discussion has been undertaken.

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